1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1888) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11
Yezidis MN10

K 585 capture of the bride is simulated, though she is in reality purchased by the presents sent at the time of betrothal. But although Moslems, the Kûrds are K 585 586 practically monogamists, and divorce, though permitted, is very rare among them. Their customary oath, "May I divorce my wife if I," &c., well illustrates their unwillingness to avail themselves of this privilege.

Y 585 583 586 The Yezidi sect are, however, polygamists, and, like the Turks, may have three wives. Marriages with near relatives, and also with brothers- or sisters-in-law, are common among them, and no objection is K V 585 made to divorce as with the Moslem Kûrds. Their 743 weddings are performed by Sheikhs of their own creed, the preliminaries being usually settled by the friends of the contracting parties. The ceremony consists of a mutual public declaration in the presence of the priest, who pronounces a blessing on the couple, and it concludes with the bridegroom's giving to the Sheikh a loaf, and receiving in return one of consecrated bread, which he divides with the bride. It is said that, when pronouncing the marriage oath, the bridegroom stands in running water, signifying that he thus washes away the binding nature of the promise, and consequently renders its breach less sinful. The lower Y [743] grades of the sacerdotal order, the *pîrs* and *kawwals*, perform the marriage ceremony for the common people; but the services of the Sheikh Nâsir, or high priest, are sometimes secured by persons of consequence in the community.

K 764 A Kûrdish funeral, although it forms a striking

no reason to believe, however, that such early prohibitions differed too greatly from those formulated by the Prophet. Specifically, it is forbidden for persons to marry their grandparents, parents, the brothers and sisters of their parents, and their own brothers and sisters. Further, noting that polygyny is permitted, a man is prohibited from having two sisters as his wives. Only if one sister dies, is he permitted to wed the survivor. Finally, an infant whose mother cannot feed him is often given to a wet-nurse, and this person, no matter what her status (in Rowandus she is typically a villager) becomes his "mother." In later life he is under the same restrictions toward her and her kindred as he is toward his own mother, for example, he can never marry her daughter. The townspeople of Rowandus provided rationalizations for some of these matters, and they are extended here with little comment. The rule that a man could not be married to two sisters simultaneously was explained by the usage that a husband habitually addressed his parents-in-law as "father" and "mother," his brother-in-law as "brother," and his sister-in-law as "sister," although, as will be seen, there are also separate terms for relatives by marriage. A man cannot take the sister of his wife as a second bride, it was said, because it was as if she were his real "sister," as he called her. In Kurdistan descent is commonly discussed in two ways, through the blood (xiwn) of the parents and through the milk (shir) of the mother. Great

importance is attached to nursing, and the ultimate curse 611
of a mother toward her offspring, the rarest of events, is 853
the wish that her "milk should never have been a misfortune
in his mouth." It is forbidden for children who have been 582
nursed at the same breast to marry and for this reason a 834
youth can never wed his foster-sister, the daughter of his 609
wet-nurse. It must be noted that in selecting a wet nurse, 611
one with whose daughter an advantageous marriage might be 853
subsequently arranged is never sought, but rather some
woman of the lower classes or of the villages. Neither of
these explanations, nor a third, that of descent through
"blood," can be expanded to explain the prohibition of
marriage between two generations. To amplify this state-
ment, one cannot marry his sister "because they have been
nursed at the same breast," but the rationale does not
apply to an aunt who is similarly forbidden.

Islamic law permits a man to take four wives if he 595
so chooses. This, however, in its full realization presents
many more obstacles than are immediately apparent. First,
he must pay separate dowries for each spouse, and the dowry,
as has been seen, as well as the feeding, clothing, and
maintenance, of a single wife is not an inexpensive under-
taking. Polygyny, then, is more often than not the [854]
prerogative of the extremely wealthy. At the same time, [878]
the threat to connubial happiness in maintaining two or
more wives under the same roof is widely recognized in the
Middle East, and there are many examples, in literature and
in popular speech, of the intense jealousy developed in such
a situation

a situation. The tendency is for most persons to remain 595 ●
monogamous, and the usual reason for taking a second wife
is the failure of the first to produce a male heir when, [841]
at the same time, the husband is loathe to divorce the
barren woman in question. Ra'uf Effendi was 'thinking' of
marrying a second wife who could replace the son he had
lost, because the woman to whom he had been married for
many years had passed the stage of child-bearing. He has
not, however, carried out this intention yet. Sometimes a
wife herself will suggest suggest the second marriage. In
Rowandus, in 1951, there were no men with a plurality of
brides. It was said that some of the chieftains in older
times had been able to maintain a number of wives in
separate establishments, but most of this seems to have
disappeared.

The preferred form of marriage is that between a 582
man and his father's brother's daughter. If the father
and the uncle live under the same roof, it can be seen that
such a match prevents the dowry from being paid into a
strange hand, and in marriages of this type the stipulated
sum of the dowry is often highly fictional. In Kurdistan
a man always has the first claim on his paternal uncle's
daughter, and his consent must first be obtained if she
is to marry someone else. A bitter feud can ensue if the [578]
parents of the maiden, in view of some advantageous alliance,
override this prerogative. If an idealised situation is
imagined in which the prescription that a man must marry

follow. The husband or his relatives may be forced to pay the mu'akher, always a considerable sum, and the father of the wife, in addition to having an unmarried woman on his hands, may lose the amounts he included with the dowry in his daughter's wedding. Unofficial separations of varying length are thus as common as divorces, during which the two parties of relatives, or, indeed, one of the couple, try to effect a reunion. Barrenness puts both husband and wife in a more difficult position, for a man's desire for a male heir can easily overrride his love for his wife, particularly, as often happens, in those matches in which he had little to do with his choice of a spouse. Divorces are far less frequent after the birth of the first boy, and it is perhaps partially for this reason that a young married woman is as desirous of a son as her husband, having recourse to certain popular religious procedures believed to aid in producing a male heir. Most persons cannot afford or will not countenance a second wife if the first is barren, and a divorce follows. Fortunately for the women, the Kurds do not believe that because a woman has been childless in one marriage she will remain so in the next.

The life of adults in Rowandus, once the problems of a career and sex have more or less been solved, has little of the stress encountered in adolescence. Persons of the lower classes, both men and women, must spend the greater part of their waking hours in seeking a livelihood, and the wealthiest townspeople and the Kurdish aristocrats

4: Nausch E-5 (1937) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

keep their wives in seclusion, and this practice has quite recently sprung up being due to Turkish influence ...."[6]. And Edmonds writes: "Many travellers before 1914 recorded their impression that Kurdish women enjoyed in general a good deal more freedom than their Arab, Turkish and Persian sisters"[7]. In regard to marriage and the polygyni mentioned by the Coran and known in other Muslim areas, Soane[8] declares that: "The Kurd from north to south is monogamous" adding:[9] "free intercourse between the sexes is the rule, and the result is a large number of love marriages ....".

It is fact that the individual Kurdish woman of the upper class has, in situations difficult for the Kurdish people, sprung into the limelight, which seems incompatible with the view adopted concerning woman's restricted possibilities of action in Muslim areas, but may possibly be due to the prominent position of their families[10]. Khanum Osman Pasha, Lady Adila of Halabja[11] of the Ardalan Vazir family, married to Osman Pasha of the Baganda family, is the best known case. Her husband, towards the end of the Turkish period, was made the *qa'im maqam* in Halabja. Even while he was alive all effective authority passed to his wife. In 1910 Major Soane lived as a servant with her son, Tahir Beg, after Soane had accepted Islam in 1906 and, under the name of Mirza Ghulam Hussain Shirazi, travelled in these areas in disguise. Later, under the British mandate after 1918, it was she, now a widow, with whom the British political officers negotiated. Her personality must have been

Fig. 2. Village aristocracy. Married woman at the garden basin, Sarkan.
Fig. 3. Village aristocracy. Married woman making cigarettes, Sarkan. (See p. 10).

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

Fig. 6. Urban milieu. Uneducated married woman and educated girl taking tea in the courtyard. Sulaimani.

The Kurdish women whose cultural pattern is to be considered below cannot, in my view, be grouped under the common denominator of "the Kurdish woman". Even on the basis of such relatively limited investigation material as was available to me, four different female environments can be pointed to, the cultural patterns of which vary very greatly. The first and most obvious division is that between village and provincial environment, but these two groups can be further subdivided, though on different principles.

The village milieu can be socially divided into two strata, the aristocracy and the peasants. To the former belong the sheikh houses in Topzawa, Shaqlawa, Sargala and Serkan. I visited peasant homes in Topzawa, Rikawa, Mirza Rastam and Shaikha. The police official's house I dwelt in at the ferry town of Mirza Rastam was in between the two.

The provincial town environment (for the sake of simplicity called urban milieu) I first met with in the local Liwa capital, Sulaimani, but also in Kirkuk, Halabja, Tawella and Rowanduz. The women of this urban milieu could be sharply divided into two groups, the "educated" who had been given schooling, and the "uneducated" who, like the village women, could neither read nor write. These two groups of urban women could be met with in the same house, as was the case in the home of my interpreter, where the husband's two wives belonged to the "uneducated" group whilst the daughters had attended school and thus represented the other group. But even though these two groups of urban women were found within the same household their cultural patterns were quite different.

The part of Kurdistan I visited (Southern Kurdistan) is mountainous and lies in the northern sub-tropical zone. The year consists of a cool winter half year, with rain from November to April, and a hot, rainless summer from May to October. As an exception I experienced a violent shower on June 5th (1957). The villages lie on the sides of hills above the cultivated fields. The houses, for the most part built together in rows, lie in terraces above each other up the steep slope of the hill, so that the flat roof of the uppermost house forms an open space outside the one above it. The communications consist of mountain tracks hedged by scrub and heaped-up stones, or the bottom of dried-out watercourses. No attempt has anywhere been made to level the ground. The watercourses and springs

Fig. 28. Lane in Sulaimani. Left: wall of burnt bricks. Right: wall of mud bricks.
Fig. 29. Mud wall with entrance to baking room. Woman is rolling dough on a baking table. Sulaimani.

The home now to be reviewed as a type of residential background for the two feminine environments in urban surroundings, is the family house of my interpreter in Sulaimani. The father was a businessman who, as representative for a big firm in Baghdad, had a shop for electrical articles in the main street of Sulaimani. Although he traded in these modern things the business was fitted up like one of the larger booths in the *sūq* with a carpet-covered bench for the customers and a small workshop table for the proprietor—for example, just like a goldsmith's booth.

In addition to the husband, about 60, the family in this home consisted of two wives, 35 and 37, and eleven children. Of these five were sons: 26, 13, 8, 6 and about 6 months, and six daughters: my interpreter, 25, the others 23, 17, 16, 15 and 3. A 19 year old daughter was married and lived with her husband's family (joint or extended family household). Normally, then, 14 persons lived in the home.

Like the Sheikh property at Topzawa, the home was an entity shut off from the world around although not resident in a detached house. It comprised one of a row of one-storied houses built together in the older quarter of Sulaimani, and looked out on an unpaved alley between windowless walls. The house consisted of an older part built of sun-dried clay bricks, and a newer section built of fired yellow bricks. Both parts had a roof of poplar rafters covered with brushwood and a rolled clay roof on top. The only difference between them was that the rafters of the older part of the house projected, as is the case in village architecture, like a strong eave for the protection of the clay roof, whilst the clay roof had almost no projection over the brick walls. The house was constructed around a courtyard. Apart from the iron entrance door it was completely shut off from the outside world. The entrance door was at one end of the wall of fired brick that shut

The birth of a girl in Kurdistan might cause a husband subjected to neighbours' pressure, to initiate negotiations about one wife more[56], who would be able to bear him a son. Attempts were made to protect a male child against the evil eye by dressing it in girl's clothes[57], by sewing triangular amulet pockets onto its clothes, and by fasting ornaments to its hair and glass beads and buttons around the arms. These ornaments were blue, the colour that averts evil (see amulets).

Circumcision, an ancient Arab custom, is preserved in Islam, though not directly mentioned in the Coran. According to Juynboll[58] the male child is circumcised on the 7th day, the 40th day, or not until its 7th year of life or on reaching puberty. According to Østrup[59], circumcision is performed on the 9th day of life at the same time as the naming ceremony. In the case of the Kurdish boys, it is said to be practised when they are about 5 days old.

Naming ceremony. In Southern Kurdistan the naming ceremony was said to take place on the child's 7th day of life. According to my interpreter, a *mulla*, sitting in a tailor's posture, took the child on his lap and whispered 7 times into its ear: "I call thee (name), son (daughter) of Havva (Eve)". Examples of names for boys are: *'Arif, Hamid, Ja'fer, Karim, Kemâl, Mahmud, Majid, Muhammad, Qâsim, Sa'id, Sardâr, Wahid, Walid*, and for girls: *Aja, 'Atîya, Gulla, Maliha, Nahîd, Nâhida, Sahiha*.

In accordance with Oriental custom the Kurds have no surname[60]. In the case of men the addition of the title Sayyid or Sheikh existed. My host at the village of Topzawa was referred to by everybody, also by his wife, as "Sheikh" Taifûr. In my experience the term sheikh was used in front of a man's name to describe a man of the village aristocracy belonging to the family that owned the village in question. For example there were *Sheikh Taifûr* and his brother, usually called "*Mâm(a)-Xâl(a)*", but whose real name was *Abdul Qâdir Sheikh 'Arif*, who owned the villages of Topzawa and Rakawa in concert. There was also a third brother, *Kâka Rizâ* (Elder brother R.) or *Sheikh Rizâ*, who owned the village of Sargalu. The eldest son of Sheikh Taifûr was likewise addressed as *Sheikh Sardâr*. Thus the word sheikh is not a designation for a descendant of the prophet, as maintained by Barth[61] and Lees[62], both of whom confuse the term "Sheikh" with that of "Sayyid". In Kurdistan, I found that "Sheikh" stood for a member of a tribal ruling family[63] and also that, as maintained by Leach: "the name is however carried as an ordinary name"[64]. As regards the people I lived amongst the term carried with it no religious power or reputation of holiness[65].

Additions like those, used in Arabia and Iran:[66] "father to, slave of, son of ... and so forth, are not used by the Kurds.

Women are addressed and referred to as "madame", (in my case Madame Henny, not Madame Hansen). In addition—a peculiarity of the Kurds—the male title "khan" could be added to the name of a distinguished woman[67]. My interpreter referred to and addressed her 3 year old sister as Bella Khan, called Sheikh Taifûr's wife Na'ima Khan, and was herself referred to as Maliha Khan.

The Kindergarten child. Analysis of the position of the child. As opposed to Christianity, Islam allows no place for the infant and small child, as it first recognises the child as a member of the community

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

accompanying us on our trips, without there being the slightest suspicion of difficulty with him. We literally scarcely realised his existence so well did he fit into the various situations. In the over-populated home at Sulaimani, however, I once saw my interpreter's mother, the elder of the two wives, run through the room with a glowing twig from the fire to hit him with it for some reason or other. My impression was that the woman unjustifiably had demanded some service or other from the lad, which he had refused, and that it was she who was in the wrong.

In another urban milieu, an absolutely uneducated one insofar as the woman was concerned, I once came across what we should term a difficult and malicious girl of 6–7 years of age. She was the elder of two girls, two others having died, and the mother was clearly unbalanced because the husband, pressed by neighbours and possibly also by personal proclivities, had several times been about to obtain another wife who would bear him the son refused to the present wife. The child was a visible manifestation of the mother's conflict situation, and can, in my opinion, only be considered an exception among the Kurdish children I had an opportunity of observing.

By reviewing the activities of the children in and outside the home in the four different female environments I learned to know in Southern Kurdistan, an attempt will be made to give an impression of their adolescence and upbringing.

Small girls of the village aristocracy took part in women's house work according to their age and ability. They assisted in rolling out the dough for baking from the age of three. They kept the sheep still when being milked in the courtyard, and kept the flies away when their elders were at meals. They helped to pick the vegetables in the field. They assisted adult men and women in the washing of hands, which took place in a squatting position whilst water from a jug was poured over the hands. They filled the samovar with charcoal and took part in washing-up. Last, but not least, they participated in the serving of tea, as it was the children, or, if none was present, the humblest in the company, who fetched the tea glasses from the samovar and returned with them when they were empty (cf. p. 48). This was done with seriousness and decorum, and with no little pride at having reached the stage where that was entrusted to them. They attended to the small brothers and sisters, helped them to eat, and had small ones on their backs when they left the house. School attendance was not part of their life pattern. A *mulla*, however, told me that he had a daughter attending the village boy's school where he taught (Balkha), but that was an exception[72].

Small girls of the village aristocracy were, when grown up, fully trained in the skills expected of them. They were well-acquainted with house work, the care of children, and with decorous behaviour.

In Sheikh Taifir's home at Topzawa most of the house work was done by a 17 year old daughter, who also stood in attendance if, for example, her mother wanted to take a bath in the *hammâm*. It was said that until one of the sons—the eldest of whom was only 18—came home with a daughter-in-law, the mother did not wish to give away in marriage the indispensible working power represented by her daughter.

The boys within the village aristocracy were sent to school. As they reached a suitable age, the sons of the sheikh at Topzawa were sent to relatives' homes at Kirkuk or Sulaimani in order to attend school[73]. During these years they glided out of the village milieu, only returning to it during their

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA 11 Kurd MA 11

831 684 the bride was punished for not having guarded the honour of the family—not by her injured husband, but by men of her own family—she would be taken to be examined by the woman gynaecologist to discover whether the lacking proofs of virginity were due to some physical irregularity. It was stated that the metre of white cotton material that comprised the actual, detachable, bridal sheet would be kept by the bride's family for a year as proof for the bride's in-laws if any doubt should be raised about the bride's honour. "About a year" means to about the birth of the first child. After that the bride sheet would be washed and included in the household linen.

585 831 In view of the very definite modesty prevalent among Kurds, and the aversion to any display of nakedness, the lack of modesty when it is a matter of first mating is quite unusually surprising. It is a public affair and must therefore be extremely embarrassing for the young woman; equally painful must it be for the young man who is expected immediately to consummate the marriage and then, his garments adjusted, to leave the field to the waiting woman, who roughly dries the bride's genital opening in order to obtain as clear a trace on the sheet as possible. I heard of no case where a named bride had been killed on her wedding morning.

183 562 684 831 Hay[134] states that with the Kurds the law is very strict as regards the honour of women, but it seems to be the honour of married women that is concerned when he says that "a woman ... who misconducts herself, or, who is suspected on reasonable grounds of misconducting herself, must surely die; and the husband, brother or whoever is responsible for her, who fails to put her out of the way, is considered to have lost his honour, and a Kurd's *nâmûs* or honour is one of his most precious possessions". From what I was told it is only the young, unmarried girls whose honour is guarded by such drastic measures.

In regard to the bridal sheet custom, Nikitine[135] says that is was falling into desuetude as early as 1922, remarking that it is "à son déclin, une coutume consistant à mettre sur le lit des nouveaux mariés un linge blanc ("pyslâr"), qu'on renvoie ensuite aux parents de la jeune femme, comme preuve de sa virginité".

585 831 191 The use of the bridal sheet with the Iranian Lurs is mentioned by Feilberg[136]. That the Arabs kill a young woman who does not pass the test, and that this is done by her own male relatives, is referred to by Dickson[137], though he adds that he has heard of one case where "... the man being chivalrous enough to smuggle into the bridal chamber a fresh piece of meat with blood on it, with which to soil the bed linen ...". To this can be put Nerreter's information about the Arabs as long ago as 1703: that it is seldom that the unfortunate bride suffers, "denn sie wissen Künste"[138].

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595 *Polygamy and divorce.* According to the Coran, provided a man's economic position allows it he may have up to four wives at a time[139], but is obliged to treat them alike and spend an equal amount of time, day and night, with each of them[140].

586 587 The husband has sole right to an immediate dissolution of the marriage by pronouncing *talâq*: "I renounce thee" or, better: "I abandon all right over thee". Until the expiration of the *'idda*-period[141] the wife cannot contract a new marriage, and during this term she is entitled to maintenance[142]. By *talâq* a man can twice divorce himself from his wife but, should he regret his act, can without further

4: Hanaen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

ceremony make her his wife again within the above-mentioned period[163]. Should he have pronounced *talāq* three times or have stated it thrice on the first occasion, the wife must contract a pro forma marriage with another man and must be renounced by this "straw husband" before the husband can take her back[164]. The Coran forbids the promise of abstinence, or if you will, a semi-divorce within marriage, that is to say, that the husband declares: "Let thy back be to me as my mother's", known as *ẓihār* (*ẓahr* = back)[165]. In this case the wife will not obtain the right to return to her family home with everything she brought into the marriage, plus what she may herself have earned and that part of the bride price (usually one third) that has been put aside for such a contingency, and with a view to facilitating a new marriage.

On her side the wife has the following possibilities of securing the dissolution of the marriage: The marriage contract can contain a clause to the effect that neglect on the part of the husband gives the wife the right to regard the marriage as dissolved, by repaying the bride price, if she can prove before a judge that the man does not fulfil his obligations in regard to maintaining her in accordance with her station; in cases of certain illnesses or if it should transpire that he is of poorer birth than stated.

On contracting marriage the husband undertakes to provide for the wife; she in return engages to present him with children, which means that the children born belong to the man's home. If the marriage is dissolved whilst the children are small, the wife takes with her male children under two years of age[166], girls under nine (or up to puberty), whereafter they return to the husband's home. On marriage, therefore, the woman runs the risk of being renounced (attempts being made to reduce this by the fixing of a high bride price, and particularly by making as high as possible that part of it set aside for possible later payment); she also runs the risk of sharing the man with another wife or more. The husband runs a risk that the wife the women of his family have selected for him, whom in most cases he has never seen, is impossible to live with. To meet this contingency he has the immediate right to divorce her and also the right to take other wives.

Having briefly recounted the ordinary rules of Islam within the *shāfi'i* rite to which the Kurds belong, I shall now attempt to recount what I experienced during my relatively short stay in Southern Kurdistan in order to throw light on matters concerning divorce and polygamy. I take these two phenomena together for, as will appear below, they are interwoven, and the one is often the reason for the other.

At the time I was able to study the conditions, there was in each of the three or four homes of the village aristocracy that constitute my material for comparison, only one wife. This happened to be so in the case of the sheikh families in Topzawa, Sargalu, Shadala and Serkan. Soane[167] states that the Kurds from north to south are monogamous, an assertion repeated by his wife[168]. This does not quite accord with my experience. In Topzawa the current wife had five children aged 18, 17, 13, 8 and 6. In the home there was also a step-daughter of 12. As illegitimate children are unknown in the Kurdish pattern of life, the sheikh, within a period lying between 1938 and 1945, has had two wives for a shorter or longer period, and the one who only presented him with one child was sent home to her parents.

The sister of the present one, about 35 years of age, was married to an old sheikh in Shadala. There appears here to have been a *succession* of marriages. Several groups of married sons with wives and

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

565 children living in the home showed that there must have been other wives. The sheikh himself stated
595 that in his long life he had been married nineteen times! This can be compared with a statement by Hay[169] about "Old Ibrahim, Agha of the Dizay", who, 70 years old, had had nineteen wives. So far as I could discover the position was the same as that reported by Lane[170]: "Hence it often happens that, when a man who has already one wife wishes to marry another girl or woman, the father of the latter, or the female herself who is sought in marriage, will not consent to the union unless the first
[586] wife be previously divorced". But even if the man divorces his current wife to conform to the wishes of his new wife or her family, the children remain in the paternal home, which, when they marry, the sons extend to a joint family household.

587 Two half-grown 13–14 year old step-daughters with the sheikh of Sargalu marked the existence of
595 an earlier marriage, as did the presence at home of three married sons of the sheikh in Serkan. Of this family it was said that not only the sheikh but also his wife had been married before, she being the widow of his brother—thus a case of levirate marriage. Among the village aristocracy I thus was able to determine divorces, successions of marriages, and children of former marriages remaining in the home, but in this milieu I did not meet several wives simultaneously in the home.

595 In the humble village milieu it seemed that monogamy was the more usual, probably for economic
369 reasons. On the other hand I met here two cases of women who, taking with them their small children —a boy of 2 and a girl of 4 in Topzawa, and a male baby and girl of 5, both of whom later died, in Serkan—had left their husbands who had failed in their obligations in regard to maintaining them. They had been taken on as domestic help[171] at the sheikh's homes in Topzawa and Serkan. Thus the women had not returned to their families. A repudiated wife with a boy of about 2 in the humble village milieu in Balkha was said to live with and be supported by her family.

595 In the educated urban milieu I met a newly-married teacher couple (seen each other before marriage),
[586] and a teacher couple with two children (never seen each other before marriage). The latter were monogamous, as was the case with the former, and a very high sum was stated to be put aside for the young woman in the event of divorce (or widowhood).

595 There remain conditions in what is called the uneducated urban milieu or, if one prefers it, the
565 old-fashioned urban milieu which still retains its original structure devoid of Western influence. The
[463] milieu of this kind that I learned to know possessed a good economic basis and was represented by small traders in Sulaimani and Kirkuk, who acted as agents for Baghdad firms dealing in electrical articles, bycycles and spare parts for automobiles. From the point of view of trade they represented the new times, but the structure of their homes evinced the old. Here I met polygamy functioning and could observe its effects on daily life, in the arrangement of the home, the distribution of the man's interest in regard to the wives, relations with the other's children, and the distribution of work within the women's world of the home. There were only two wives. One thing is the permission given by the
[611] Coran to possess up to four wives simultaneously, another thing is practice—which presupposes—
[582] when these four are augmented by female slaves, also permitted by the Coran—both unlimited wealth and unlimited room, and was consequently very definitely an upper class phenomenon, reserved to

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

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the highest and richest in the present Arab countries and Turkey, until Kemal Atatürk and the revolution in the 1920s.

In the home I stayed in at Kirkuk the order that both wives should be treated in the same way; was punctually fulfilled. The wives lived in two dwellings[172] which were the reflection of each other, each consisting of bedroom and a reception room divided by a corridor that led from the entrance door to the vine-covered courtyard. In each house this courtyard was surrounded by cookhouse, latrine, bathroom, etc. Cement steps led up to a flat roof. The two dwellings were built together, into one house, but with separate entrances from the street. There was no connexion within between the two women's domains. The women were of about the same age, about 35, and childless (abortions, operations etc.). Both had been sent separately on a pilgrimage. Their house furniture was identical. The husband attended to the daily household purchases, and took it in turn to spend a day and a night with each, that is to say as much of that period as a man spends in his home, which in this case meant the morning and evening meal, plus the night. The women visited each other, but led, or at all events could lead, an existence quite independent of each other. My main impression was that it was two women's houses I visited, where a man alternately paid a visit—not what one imagines in connexion with a man's house with two wives.

The other home also with two wives was that of my interpreter in Sulaimani. Here there was a divorce history, with complete information concerning the acquisition of a new wife. The elder wife in 1957 was in the middle fifties. It was difficult to obtain accurate particulars about age, as women only reckoned with before or after the change of life. She had passed her climacteric. The eldest living child was 26. The younger wife was in the end of the thirties; her eldest child was 19. The father had been out in a village as a trader, seen the young woman and asked her family if he might have her to wife. However, this was not done until he had conferred with his first wife, whom he had promised that the new wife would help in the house where the two women were to live together with the small children of the first wife. However, the two women had not got on well together. The first or elder wife had been returned to her home with all her effects, but leaving behind three children who were over 6–7 years of age. When they had reached maturity they had demanded that the father should take back their mother. This had been done after she had, as the law demands, gone through a pro forma marriage with another man and been repudiated by him. My interpreter told me, however, that her father did not live with her mother, but as at the time I was there she was in the mid fifties this was not of immediate importance. How was daily life between the two wives now? On family visits during *qurbān bairām* the husband took both his wives. Wife No. 2 conducted the marriage negotiations for the son of No. 1 wife. Wife No. 1 rocked the cradle and looked after No. 2's lastborn child, an infant 4 months old. The newly-married daughter of No. 1 paid a visit to the home in mourning clothes (that is to say devoid of ornaments) when the baby of No. 2 died. My interpreter, who was a daughter of No. 1 treated her small half-sisters with the same care, both sentimentally and economically (in regard to the purchase of footwear, gifts and children's clothing in Baghdad), as she showed to her adult brother and sister. When the daughter of No. 1 was to be married and the women of the family were planning the future life of the young couple as a pair of teachers in one of the villages, it was suggested that the bride's mother, that is the elder wife, should move out and give her daughter

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

595 565 a hand with the housework, look afte her future children, and keep her company when the husband, as is the custom in Islamic areas, spet a large part of the day in company with other men. This arrangement, I was told, was purely dueto practical considerations. The presence of the second, younger wife in the home in Sulaimani with er nine children (one, a daughter, was married), who with the three adult children of the elder wif, plus the husband, brought the size of the family up to 14. All the girls over a certain age had, as opposed to their mothers, gone over to an educated milieu away from the home, and left behind a colossal burden of work, particularly in the winter, in the form of cooking, baking, washing, etc., for he two wives at home. This burden was equally divided between the two wives, which was too much or the elder. By moving out to the village with her newly-married daughter she would obtain a far easier life. In the home in Sulaimani it was apparently not possible for the one wife to leave an undueamount of work to the other; on the contrary they appeared to share it all loyally. The one making tea made it for the whole family, the one cooking or washing clothes did the same. Similarly, thetwo wives certainly seemed to share the daily work in the house, and their children showed equal affection for both mother and stepmother.

595 586 In this case, then, the husband had seen in a village a beautiful, stronglimbed girl with whom, to use a European term, he fell in love; showing due consideration for his first wife he had made her his second. The divorce here was due to the fact that the two women could not agree.

A young wife with two quite small children, who was returned to her family by the husband, was quoted as an example of incompatibility of temperaments. The husband was much older and very wealthy, but, it was said, incredibly miserly, and the wife refused to submit to this. Before I left I heard that the man had regretted his repudiation which apparently had not been triple and final. He now wanted her to return before the expiration of her *'idda*-period.

A man of my interpreter's fa[illegible] a half-brother of her stepmother, was married to a woman of about 25, who since she was married to him (at the age of 11), had borne him four daughters, two of whom (7 and 2) had survived. As all the children had been female, and under pressure from friends and neighbours, he was seeking a second wife who would, he hoped, be able to bear him sons. Three times marriage negotiations had been initiated on his behalf but for various reasons had broken down. The man was now at the end of the thirties. His wife appeared to be reduced to despair by the situation; and it would be difficult for the new wife to cooperate with her; furthermore she faced the prospect of the new woman demanding her divorce before consenting to matrimony, or that, cooperation failing between the two wives, she would later be cast out.

595 565 369 To sum up: Polygamy exists among Kurds in the uneducated urban milieu, but the number of wives does not exceed two. Successive marriages, with children of earlier marriages as members of the family, exist among the village aristocracy. Monogamy prevailed in the humble village milieu, perhaps mainly for economic reasons. Monogamy also prevailed in the educated urban milieu.

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

562 In none of the three female environments so far considered was the idea of liberty understood in the same way as it is in the West.

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562 In the fourth and last female environment, the uneducated urban milieu, the veiling was obligatory. 369 As opposed to their educated sisters the uneducated also maintained seclusion. Nothing in their daily 571 activities brought them into contact with the man's world. Household purchases were attended to by the husband. I was also told that goods connected with dress were hawked from house to house by women. However, women's sealed-off world was not confined to the home, for all women's apart- [594] ments in the town were in contact with each other. A stream of female visitors entered the home, the women of which frequently visited other houses. Under cover of transportable seclusion there was considerable freedom within the urban woman's world. In consequence, uneducated women in towns obtained an opportunity of contact that lay on a quite different social plane from that applying to the three other feminine milieus. Among humble village women the same possibility naturally applied. Here, however, it took place just as much at watering and washing places, etc., less in the homes. In the uneducated feminine milieu in Kurdistan, subjected to the veil and seclusion, a decisive barrier existed between the men's and women's worlds, not only in leisure but also in working hours.

591 For a man married to one or two wives in the uneducated women's milieu in a town like Sulaimani, 595 one found what Østrup[23] describes as typical of a Turkish home: "for an Oriental his house is the place where his wife and children are, and where he eats his meals and spends the night ... his real home is either his shop or his favourite café, where he meets the people whose company constitutes his spiritual content ...".

562 In the uneducated feminine environment in Sulaimani as represented by my interpreter's home, 252 with its two wives whose sphere of work fell within the framework of the home, the actual place of work could, exceptionally, be moved to the female area of another home. When baking a larger supply of bread, the dough for which was prepared by an outside woman who arrived at dawn, the two housewives later in the morning transferred the actual operation to the house of a neighbour. Here there was a sunken, jar-shaped clay oven that could be used by several women simultaneously. This was more effective than the convex iron sheet laid over the fire that sufficed for daily needs.

562 Visits and return visits constituted the social contact with the outside world. In my experience the 574 educated women in the house only made purchases in the *sūq* and then only of material, never, of 443 meat and vegetables. As mentioned, the daily household purchases were made by the husband and delivered by small boys, of whom there were swarms, who in this way contributed towards their keep. That women did not shop at the meat and vegetable stalls was not considered as any form of oppression, in fact my impression was precisely the same as Woodsmall's, who writes: "... as a rule the conservative Moslem woman in the past did not do her own shopping ... For the women of the past, their lack of freedom for personal shopping was doubtless not regarded as an infringement on their liberty but a convenience"[24].

562 An investigation as to which men beyond the immediate family circle had access to the homes of 463 uneducated urban women disclosed that certain traders or artisans were admitted. A half-blind up-

4: Ihmen E-S (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

His leisure

562 hours were spent at his favourite tea house or in the streets. The division applied also to the adolescent
593 sons, who in their leisure hours were sent out from the homes to obtain a "street education" (see
p. 114, 115). Only small boys of from 5 to 6 years of age still belonged to the home, that is to say, the
[883] women's world. For an outsider it seemed that this separation of the two sexes during the day caused
517 the men to inhabit a world utterly devoid of women. From tea houses, booths, or on benches men saw only anonymous, concealed figures hasten past. No woman's face or form was visible. When Ostrup[28] says that in Oriental areas a man outside his home meet the persons—other men—who constitute his spiritual content, he is quite right as regards conditions in a Kurdish town like Sulaimani. However, this can be extended to mean that the man also meets in other men persons who come to mean something for him in other ways. The social conventions of Kurdish men evinced at times a homosexual tinge; they could be seen walking together with arms round waists, holding hands
[838] and interlacing fingers.

Within the home there seemed to be remarkable little room for him. A peg or nail on the wall for
593 his clothes, a place on the floor by the meat tray, a mattress or iron bedstead wherever he had decided
562 to sleep—that was all. Man's position in the home was clearly demonstrated one evening in my interpreter's home. A woman's party was in progress when the master of the house and his 26 year old son returned at about 10 p.m. In the courtyard, some twenty-five women were seated on chairs, mattresses
[352] and clumsy sofas, their black over-garments and veils hanging on pegs in the hall. Most of the women present were not allowed to be seen by the two men. It was technically impossible for so many women to rush simultaneously to obtain their *abā* and veils, and they therefore decided by their behaviour to create an intangible, but insurmountable, barrier between the two sexes. The men acted as though they were invisible, and the women pretended that they had not observed anyone entering the only entrance to the house. Slipping behind the row of seated women, the men disappeared into the rooms to change into their home and sleeping dress—a long striped shirt over wide pants for the elder man and pyjamas for the younger. Re-appearing, they once more stole past the seated women, and made their way to the corner of the courtyard where the ladder to the roof was leaning. Up this they vanished into the gloom. Neither the women nor the men exchanged the customary salutation. On this special occasion neither side was able to notice the presence of the other. There was nothing for the men to do but disappear from view, and as the women were occupying the area of the whole house, this meant going to bed on the roof.

593 The way this home was arranged, very few square metres seemed to be left at the disposal of the
595 husband and the grown-up son. Of course, in this case it was the common home of two wives. However,
562 there was very little more room for the man who had his two wives installed in separate, twin houses at Kirkuk. I had no opportunity to discover how the guest room, which was the one room common to both houses, functioned if the husband had male guests. To judge by similar cases in my interpreter's home it can be assumed that the women prepared refreshments, but kept to themselves in another room, cut off from the guest room by a passage that led from the street to the courtyard, or retired to the courtyard itself and the small rooms surrounding it. However, the guest room was not the husband's living room in the ordinary way. The two apartments together formed a house possessing two entrances from the street, but were inside unconnected. Each was a woman's home where the husband

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

was in turn received as an honoured guest. To illustrate how a husband's position in a Kurdish Muslim home appeared to a young Englishman, I quote a letter received from one of the British engineers at the Dokan Dam Site who, with his wife, visited my interpreter's home after my departure: "Our visit ... almost coincided with a wedding of one of the sisters there ... it is certainly a woman's world in that household. The day after the wedding, the next day that we were there, the new husband was nowhere to be seen, and when we asked where he was we got the answer that already they had got tired of him kicking his heels round the house and they had sent him out in the town." As Blackman[1] says of the Egyptian *fellāhin* woman: "Though theoretically they are supposed to be entirely in subjection to the male sex, in practise they can, and often do, maintain a very firm hold on their husbands ... Indeed, I am often inclined to think that it is the poor oppressed Egyptian man who has a claim to my sympathy, and that the over-ruled, oppressed wife is somewhat of a myth".

In regard to possibility of movement and the distribution of authority between man and woman, it appears from the foregoing that the four feminine milieus within the area investigated evince the following picture (see diagram).

Distribution of culture elements inside the four milieus.

Culture elements	Village aristocracy		Humble village		Educated urban		Uneducated urban	
	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married
Face veil and *abā*	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+	+	+
Seclusion	+	+					+	+
Freedom of movement			+	+	+	+		
Position of women	equal to men		inferior to men		equal to men		superior to men	
Common life	+							
Polygamy	+		(+)				+	

I *In the village aristocracy*: No veil, but the maintenance of seclusion. Equal distribution of authority between man and woman. A certain common life exists outside the home.

II *In the humble village milieu*: Neither veil nor seclusion. Distribution of authority in the man's favour. Slight or no common life inside the home, that is to say the maintenance of the social barrier between the men's and women's worlds.

III *In the educated urban milieu*: Use of the veil, but no seclusion. Equal distribution of authority between men and women. Slight common life in the home, thus the maintenance of the social barrier between the worlds of men and women.

IV *In the uneducated urban milieu*: Both veil and seclusion. Distribution of authority to woman's advantage. No common life in the home, thus the maintenance of a barrier between the worlds of men and women.

It is hoped that it appears from the foregoing how difficult it is to use the term "free position" (or lack of it) and "equality" (or lack of it) when it is a matter of the Kurdish variant of the Islamic cultural pattern. Seclusion cannot be compared with the lack of liberty that existed in our culture until the

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

tion of the Kurdish lineage organization we shall return to a more complete discussion of these interrelations (pp. 69 ff).

Plural wives are rather uncommon in the villages, though they are thought to be a quite desirable investment for the man who can afford it. The average incidence for 94 men in 4 villages runs c. 4 %. The levirate is not infrequently practiced, but more as a convenience than as an established rule or right. Unless the widow has a well established father or brother, she tends to remain in the house of her late husband under the protection of her brother-in-law, in which case he might as well have some return for his expenses. Strict observance of the Islamic rule of unlawful conjunction however prevents him from doing this if his first wife is a close relative of the widow (and where cousin marriage is common, this will be a fairly frequent limitation). The sororate is not known as a marriage practice.

KINSHIP.

A positional system of rights and privileges organizes the household group. Following Moslem ideals, the adult *male* has complete control, and can make any decision he sees fit. This Islamic rule seems slightly to exceed Kurdish popular feeling on the matter. It is very difficult to obtain any inpression of the internal workings of a Moslem family, but one has the feeling that Kurdish women have considerable influence in the close family circle. Occasionally this even carries outside the kinship group, so a woman may come to occupy a high political position. Similarly, the father's absolute authority is strongly questioned by the sons, as indicated by the frequency of neolocal residence. There are almost invariable tensions connected with the setting up of an independent household for a married son — the father tends to resist this reduction of his power, and for the son it takes on the color of breaking lose and becoming fully adult. However, with sacred sanctions and de-facto power supporting him, the father certainly occupies the central position as authority and organizer of the groun.

In the case of a widow with one or several sons, the household is named after the major son, and the actual position of authority

8: Leach E-5 (1938) 1940 MA11 Kurd MA11
Rowanduz

APPENDIX.

601 Note on Table of Kinship Terms

General. The Kurdish language spoken in the Rowanduz area has much in common with old Persian, but contains far fewer Arabic importations than does modern Persian. In both languages the kinship terms show a blending of Indo-European and Semitic roots but there is no close correspondence.

Terms:-	Kurdish	Persian	Arabic
Grandfather	bapir	jadd	jidd
Father	bap	pidar	ab
Mother	dayk	madar	umm
Uncle (paternal)	mamo	'amu	'amm
" (maternal)	khalo	khal	khal
Brother	bra	biradar	akh
Sister	khushk	khahar	ukht
Son	kurr	pisar	ibn
Daughter	kich	dukhtar	bint

It may be significant however that in both Kurdish and Persian Semitic words are used to describe the two types of Uncle.

Table 1. As explained elsewhere in the text, the term mamo (father's brother's child) appears to be used in a classificatory sense to include all members of Ego's tira. The colloquial use of the English word 'cousin' is closely analogous to this. It is not clear whether terms such as mardikhushk (literally 'husband of sister') are merely descriptive in the sense of 'my sister's husband', or whether they are actual terms of colloquial reference such as 'brother in law'.
Buk - 'daughter in law' - literally means 'bride'
Zawa - 'son in law' - " " 'bridegroom'
Nawa - 'grandchild' - seems to have an extended meaning in the sense of 'descendants'.

Table 2. Note that in a system of ortho-cousin marriage, 'mother's brother' may frequently be married to 'father's sister', so that the 'khalosa' may also be members of Ego's own tira.

Table 3. Khin - 'wife' - and mard - 'husband' - mean literally simply 'woman' and 'man' respectively.

[595] It is not clear how any of these tables are affected in a situation of Polygyny. Thus Jalal Beg, eighth son of the Mir of Dergala told me that he had only one brother - i.e. by his own mother. He said he addressed his step-mothers as dayk, but if he wanted to be more specific would add a name; thus dayk Fatim - 'mother Fatima'. I do not know whether any distinction is made between uncles who are full brothers of Ego's father and those who are only half brothers.